

2. (Amended) An air spring (1) in accordance with claim 9 wherein the retainer is further characterized by the intermediate ribbed reinforcement structure (16) comprising a plurality of extending ribs (17 or 20).

3. (Amended) An air spring (1) in accordance with claim 1 wherein the retainer is further characterized by the ribs (17 or 20) extending the full width of the intermediate reinforcement structure (16).

The above amendments are supported by the original specification.

Please delete claim 8.

Please add the following new claims 9 to 11.

9. An air spring (1) for absorbing and transmitting shock loads between parts moveable relative to one another, the air spring (1) comprising a flexible cylindrical sleeve (2) which is secured at each end to form a fluid chamber (14) therein, a piston (11), the sleeve (2) being secured at one end (6) to a retainer (8) and being secured at the opposing end (9) by the piston (11), the air spring being characterized by:

the retainer (8) formed as a unitary article and comprising a bead seat means (12) for securing the one end (6) of the sleeve (2), mounting means (13) for direct mounting of the air spring (1) to one of the moveable parts, and an intermediate ribbed reinforcement structure (16) located between the bead seat means (12) and the mounting means (13).

10. An air spring (1) in accordance with claim 9 wherein the intermediate ribbed reinforcement structure (16) has ribs (17 or 20) that extend the full width of the intermediate reinforcement structure (16).
11. An air spring (1) in accordance with claim 9 wherein the intermediate ribbed reinforcement structure (16) has two sets of ribs (17 or 20) extending at angles relative to each other (20 or 17).

Corrected Copy Showing Amendments

Claims

1. (Twice Amended) An air spring (1) for absorbing and transmitting shock loads between parts moveable relative to one another, the air spring (1) comprising a flexible cylindrical sleeve (2) which is secured at each end to form a fluid chamber (14) therein, a piston (11), the sleeve (2) being secured at one end (6) to a retainer (8) and being secured at the opposing end (9) by the piston (11), the air spring being characterized by:

the retainer (8) having an intermediate ribbed reinforcement structure (16) to strengthen the retainer, allowing for direct mounting of the air spring (1) to one of the moveable parts, the intermediate ribbed reinforcement structure (16) of the retainer (8) comprising an outer plate (18) and an inner plate (19) which are parallel to each other, and a plurality of ribs (17 to 20) that extend between the outer plate (18) and the inner plate (19).
2. (Amended) An air spring (1) in accordance with claim 19 wherein the retainer is further characterized by the intermediate ribbed reinforcement structure (16) comprising a plurality of extending ribs (17 or 20).
3. (Amended) An air spring (1) in accordance with claim 21 wherein the retainer is further characterized by the ribs (17 or 20) extending the full width of the intermediate reinforcement structure (16).